

# RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## *Quarterly*

VOLUME XXIV No. 4

1994

### **A Christmas Letter to Rutland Herald Employees in the Armed Forces - 1944**



*Press room and stereotype department staff: Jimmy Hurley was sick when the group picture was taken and had to be tacked on later. In the group are Assistant Foreman Skipper Longley, Foreman Al Vondette, Franny Myette (in front with the oil can), Ben Hurley and Apprentice Rollin Parker.*

## Editor's Note

The Rutland Historical Society is reproducing this letter in the hope that it may be a pleasant and nostalgic reminder of a time of caring. In 1944 *Herald* men and women at home wished to have their absent colleagues in the armed forces know that they were thinking of them on Christmas Day and hoped for their early return to their places at the *Herald*. *Herald* employees in military service were scattered to all parts of the globe, serving where they were called. Wherever they were, those at home wished them well and hoped that this Christmas letter would be a pleasant reminder of other days, those of the past and those to come.

### *The Pictures*

Included in this letter were pictures of all regular *Herald* employees at the time Al Merusi was getting photographs. Pictures of employees in the armed forces included only those the *Herald* had on hand. The *Herald* would have appreciated receiving pictures from employees in the service and would have printed them in this letter, if they had been available.

### *Composition and Makeup*

The composition and makeup for the original letter were done in the *Herald* composing room and press room, despite being undermanned and deluged with a heavy rush of business. The original printing was done at Novak's.

### *Lt. Bill Field*

Lt. Bill Field, publisher of the *Herald* until he enlisted in the Army in 1942, had no advance information about the plan for the Christmas letter. If he had known about it, we are sure that he would have wanted to send greetings and best wishes to *Herald* people in the armed forces as well as to those at home. Lt. Field was on duty in England during the spring and summer of 1944. He was moved to the continent in the fall and was in France, Belgium and Holland. He was later with a Military Government unit in Germany.

## From the Front Cover:

### *Composing Room*

The press room and stereotype department have perhaps been less affected by changes in personnel since the war than any other *Herald* department. Foreman Al Vondette is still in charge, assisted by Skipper Longley, Franny Myette, and the Hurley brothers, Jimmy and Ben. There have been several apprentices on the job during the past three years and the current man is Rollin Parker. The press room doesn't have to worry about the quantity of newsprint available so much as its quality, both of which have deteriorated under war conditions. The number of bad rolls has been greater with resulting complications from web breaks, but the papers continue to come off the press on time just the same. Changes made to save newsprint have caused temporary problems, but they've been licked by ingenuity and perseverance.

## *News Room Sends Greetings To Its Friends in Service*

The staff of the News Room, having survived the election night excitement, sends greetings to our Herald friends overseas and at home.

The News Room faces have changed frequently in the past few years, but the job of getting up the newspaper is just about the same as ever.

Art Granger, first News Room employe to report for work, still comes in at 8 a. m. to take over the reins of Day Editor. Mrs. Helen McLaughlin, city hall reporter and feature writer, is first of the city staff in at 1. City Editor Seargent Wild comes in at 2 and begins handing out assignments. Present by this time are George L. Kirk, veteran city reporter and Mrs. Rebecca Wilson, wife of Robert Wilson, AP Overseas correspondent. The news room day is in full swing.

Over on the state desk is Al Merusi, state editor, who doesn't have any time to spare what with handling the outpourings of 90 correspondents and tending to the job of taking and developing The Herald's pictures. Last of the city staff to report is Charlie Little, who recently filled in for us at Montpelier. He comes in at 4. Vincent Klock, most recent member of the city staff, left a short time ago and his job has been filled by Paul B. Butterfield, formerly with the Loeb papers in Burlington and St. Albans.

Sports Editor Fred Carbine starts work at 6 and a procession of sports celebrities flows by his desk until late in the evening. Fred has just completed work of picking the all-state football team and is now lining up the basketball season. Remember those hectic Tuesday and Friday basketball nights.

Jerry McLaughlin, managing editor, comes in at 7, checks the AP wire news, looks over the state and city situation and beefs over "tight" paper, or smiles over "loose" ones. Dick Banks, news editor, is in at 7:30, "dummies" the inside pages and begins his check of the news. By 9 the managing editor and news editor have decided on the make-up and story selection and The Herald is on its way to the press.

The staff thins out as the night progresses and at 3 a. m., the last of the news gang leave for home. Not much change from yesteryear—or so we think most of you boys will say.

Now for some of the men who were called away from The Herald by the war. Lt. Rea Murdock, reporter, is a navigator on a Flying Fortress with an outfit in Italy. Our last word from Rea was to the effect that he has been on 32 missions, mostly over southern Germany and the Balkans, as a result of which he has been decorated. Sgt. Jim Shute, sports desk, is a wire chief with the Signal Corps in England.

Somewhere in Luxembourg is S/Sgt. Arthur Willey, who was chief of the Morning Press Bureau, operated jointly at Montpelier by The Herald and Burlington Free Press. S/Sgt. Willey also directed the coverage of legislative sessions. In a recent letter to his wife he said that he is "eating like a king" in Luxembourg. Art has been in two or three major campaigns and he said in a letter: "At times, things were pretty hot." Knowing Art's natural modesty, things must have been pretty hot.

Sgt. Bud Mattison, our pre-war city editor, recently was transferred from Camp McCoy, Wis., to Camp Leonard Wood, Mo. Bud was home on leave some time ago and he looked as if he had put on some weight. Hale and hearty, he was anxious for some active service and said that he hoped he would be back sometime behind the city desk. Pfc. Johnny Scanlon, sports writer, who has been contributing a weekly column to *The Minuteman*, New England servicemen's paper, is still guarding the Atlantic approaches to Portland, Me., harbor on tiny Chebeague island.

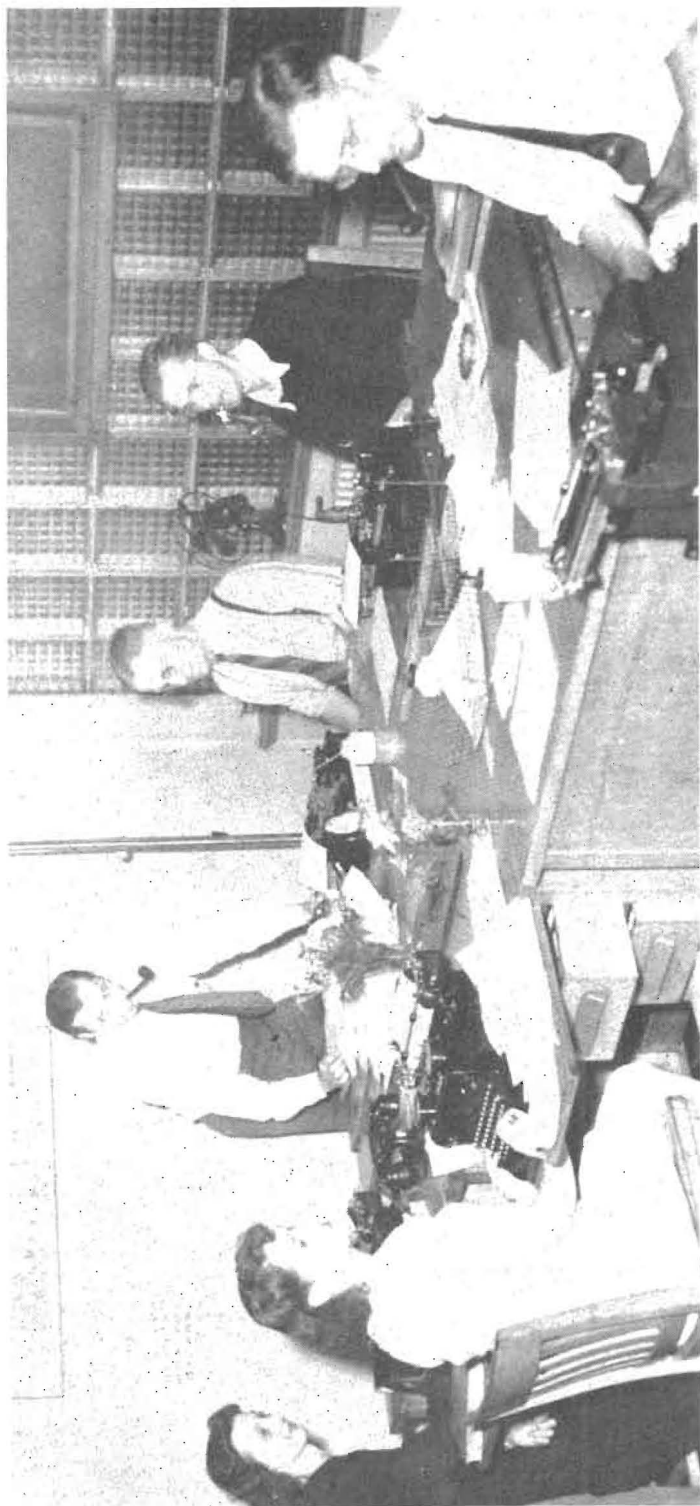
Our old friend, Sgt. Steve Billings of the *Barre Times*, once *Herald* state editor, is now somewhere in France. In a recent letter he said he was receiving *The Herald* and enjoying it. Steve sends us along a story once in a while when he finds a Rutland angle.

Several of *The Herald's* correspondents are in the service, including John Howard of Bellows Falls, Fred Chase of Bethel and Bill Fales of Middlebury.

*Herald*-trained men are making themselves heard in many branches of newspaper work. Don Guy, former city editor, is New England photo editor of the AP in Boston. Burt Foster, former city editor, is second in command of the AP's big Washington photo bureau. Both got their photo training on *The Herald*. Bob Wilson, as we mentioned above, is covering frontline news for the AP in western Europe. Our last word was that he was covering the big push into Germany. Gil Millstein, who started his newspaper career on *The Herald*, is top by-line writer for the *New York Daily News*. Maj. Vincent Wilber, who left *The Herald* in 1939, is public relations officer in the Army. Bob St. John, who was city editor back in 1928-29, is one of NBC's leading commentators.



*Bob Wilson (right), former Herald reporter, interviews the new U.S. ambassador to France in Paris for the Associated Press.*



*The City news staff: Becky Wilson, Helen McLaughlin, Tick Klock (standing), George Kirk, Charlie Little and City Editor Searge Wild.*



*State Editor Al Merusi (standing) snapped all the staff pictures in this letter except the one above. Seated are News Editor Dick Banks, Sports Editor Fred Carbine and Managing Editor Jerry McLaughlin.*

### ***Composing Room Awaits Return Of Absent Men***

Five members of The Herald's composing room staff have answered the call to the colors to aid their country and other Allied Nations in the struggle to annihilate the Axis powers, with three of them serving in far-flung sections of the globe.

Sgt. Donaldson B. Snee, an apprentice, the first to exchange his printer's apron for G. I. garb, enlisted in the Army in April of 1942. He has been "Somewhere in Italy" for nearly two years, a member of the Army Medical corps.

In March of 1943, Pfc. Nelson Soulia, a "printer's devil," pulled his last galley proof for the duration and six, and left for Fort Devens. He now is in northern Italy, where he was hospitalized for seven months with a foot infection. Nels, who was stationed in North Africa before Italy's capitulation, is a jeep "chauffeur" and a member of the Military Police.

Seaman First Class Walter B. Logan, linotypist-compositor, is the only one of the quintet to don the Navy blue. He enlisted in the USNR in April of this year and took his "boot" training at Sampson, N. Y. He now is at Lido Beach, Long Island. (News of Cpl. Canfield and Pvt. Brunelle on page 76).



*Composing room and proof room staffs: Seated are Nelson Ross, John Jeffo and Assistant Foreman Charlie Thompson; standing, Reggie Whitemore, Gordon Lear, Pat Polzello, Harold Murray, Russ Murray, Mary Lynch, George Abbott, Henry Welch, Jim O'Grady, Joe Franzoni, John Riter, Fred Stearns, and Foreman Art Rainville.*



*Composing room day staff: 'Phonse Loyzelle (seated), retired foreman; Bill Paul, George Seager, John Jeffo and Art Brunelle, new foreman. John Jeffo's appearance twice with both day and night staffs comes as a bonus to our readers, not because he was looking for the camera, but because he was moved to the day shift after the night picture was taken.*

Although the physical aspects of the composing room remain virtually unchanged, several shifts in personnel have been made. Art Brunelle now is day foreman, following the retirement of Alphonse Loyzelle. Johnny Jeffo is working on the day side, setting editorials, towns and occasionally getting in a few licks on recipes. Pat Polzello has left his make-up job and ad composition and is devoting all his time to babying-along the No. 8 machine, and Charlie Thompson is setting ads in addition to his supervisory duties as assistant foreman.

Due to the loss of manpower the 2:15 a. m., deadline has been difficult to attain on numerous occasions, with an occasional pied galley of type resulting



from the speed-up in operations. Nevertheless make-overs have not occurred with any alarming regularity, the presses still tick off on schedule and the subscribers continue to receive the “best paper in Vermont” in time for their morning coffee.

### *Circulation Department Looks To Future*

Looking to the day when the selling of newspapers and subscriptions will again be the major problem, Earle Fuller, circulation manager, has effected a number of changes recently in his department. Some of you may have noticed that the address on your paper is printed on the wrapper—no more labels to come off and we hope, no more missed copies.

Our Springfield route has been extended to Bellows Falls with Clif Patterson at the wheel of the '41 grey Chevy panel. George E. Farrell, part time driver on the White River trip left early in September to join the teaching staff of the Littleton, New Hampshire, High School. George Blanchard, whom most of you will remember as a city route carrier a few years back, stepped into this opening and has been doing a good job. The '41 Plymouth panel is still going strong on this mountain trip which once again includes Windsor.

In the mailing room Frankie Perry, once foreman in this department, is back with us in the same capacity, replacing Bud Ward who resigned about the first of October in order to give more time to his own business. We have as other mail clerks: Larry Ward, assistant foreman; Dewitt Smith, George Costello, John Schollar, Lawrence Laliberte (newest member) and Don Hubbard.

This crew rang up a record for themselves in putting out the Election issue of November eighth. They handled approximately 18,500 copies in just about an hour and twenty-three minutes. Following a regular first edition at 3:30 a. m., the second edition was delayed until 4:40 a. m., to carry Dewey's statement conceding the election to Roosevelt.

Killington Peak has been snow capped since October 15th, and our city route carriers are beginning to show signs that they too have noticed this seasonal warning—carriers on route 10 (out Center Rutland way) and route 17 (Fire Clay and Stratton road vicinity) have signified their intentions to retire for the winter. Jimmy Phillips, Bill Shangraw's right-hand man, seems to be the oldest carrier in point of service as he goes into his fourth winter on route 5. Jim McLaughlin and Joe Lee, seniors at the Academy, are still carrying on as substitute carriers.

Cpl. Don Desmarais, former mail room foreman and delivery driver, is now stationed at Camp Howze, Tex., having been moved from North Carolina in November. He is with an anti-aircraft unit and was expecting to be transferred to infantry.

Cpl. Bob O'Shea, former mail room foreman, flew to New York from San Marcos, Tex., in November, made a phone call to his family and flew back again. Bob is now a control tower operator at an air base in San Marcos.



*The Mail room staff: Bud Ward, De Smith, Frankie Perry, John Schollar, Don Hubbard, George Costello and Larry Ward.*

Pvt. Dick Heinz, former delivery driver and mail room employe, is attending a school at Camp Maxey, Tex., learning how to handle German prisoners of war.

Sgt. Bernard Riter, former mail room employe, is a squad leader in the infantry at Camp Swift, Tex. Bernie took part in the Aleutians campaign, being stationed for some months on Kiska.



*Before the war the Herald had six delivery routes. Now there are only two covered by George Blanchard, part time driver, and Clif Patterson, the only full time circulation driver left.*

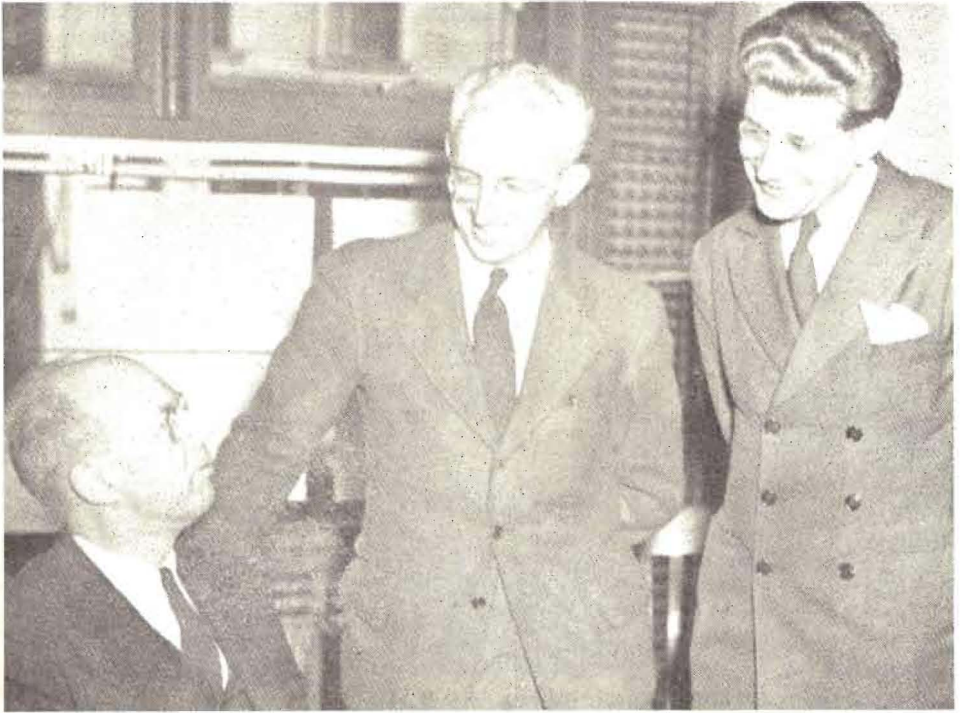
### ***Herald Business Office, Just As Always, Keeps Things Straight So That Other Departments of Paper May Function Smoothly***

The Business Office continues to keep the records, take in and pay out the cash, sell subscriptions, write letters, measure ads, make out government reports, deduct taxes (alas!) from all pay envelopes, etc. Of the pre-war staff, Mary Gallagher, Julia Mattison, Lucy Manfreda, Alice Bruten, Mary Nallen, Madeline LaVecchia, Stella Johnson and Roy Noble still carry on in their usual places.



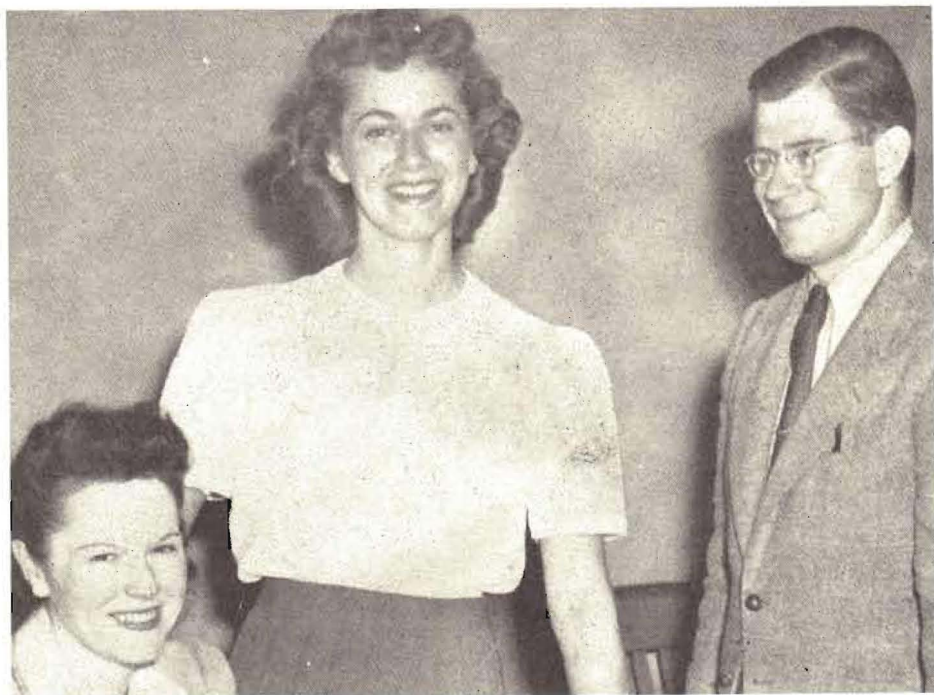
*The business office staff: Standing (l. to r.) Madeline LaVecchia, Mary Gallagher, Kate Moore, Shirley Taft and Moira Fagan. Seated (in background) Mary Nallen (opposite Miss Gallagher), Stella Johnson (back to camera), Shirley Parkhurst and Alice Bruten. Grouped at table in foreground: Mary Burke, Lucy Manfreda and Helena Leahey.*



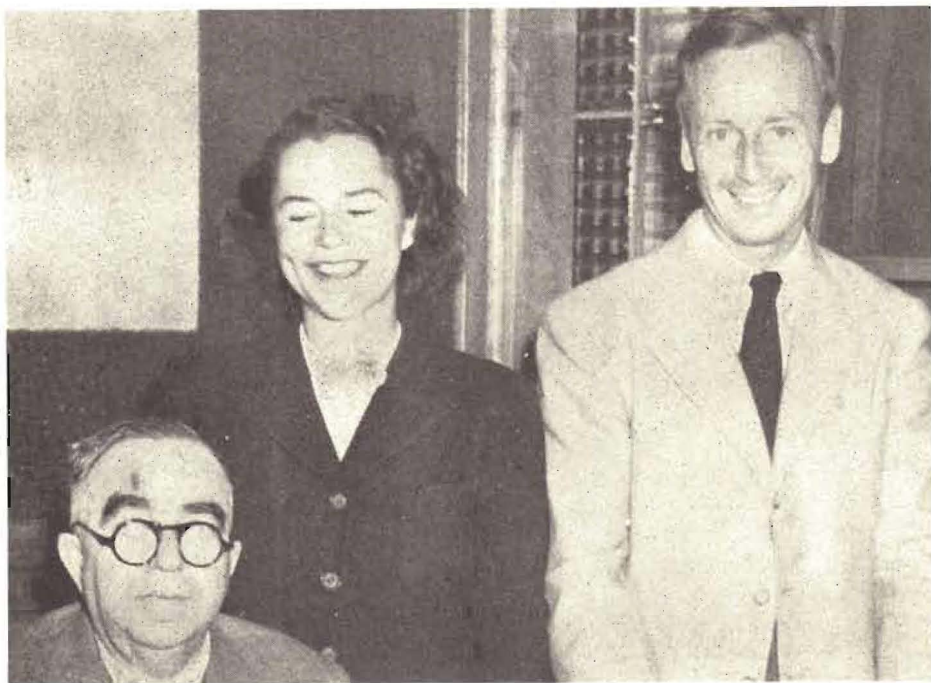


*Business Manager Roy Noble, Circulation Manager Earle Fuller, and Wilfred Perry, assistant to the business manager.*

Our homecoming service men and woman will however, see a number of new faces (Moir Fagan, Shirley Taft and Helena Leahey at the circulation counter and switchboard, Shirley Parkhurst helping Miss Gallagher and Mrs. Mattison, Catherine Moore at the addressing machine, — a new and complicated one, by the way, — and Mary Burke helping with the addressing machine and also at the circulation counter). Wilfred Perry, who left us for a while to help out the newspapers and air lines on the West Coast, responded to a cry for help when the details connected with gas, oil, fuel and newsprint paper rationing, tire certificates, priorities on repair parts for machinery, and so forth, threatened to submerge the business manager beyond view. Wilfred does most of the work on the local Paper Trooper campaign, which has been and still is really digging out the waste paper from Rutland and surrounding towns and getting it started on the journey back to the paper mills, there to be turned once more into cartons for K-rations, and the thousand other things that require paper containers, not to speak of newsprint for this and other newspapers. More than 1800 youngsters are wearing the paper trooper's shoulder patch, and it's a dull day when a new flock of privates, sergeants, lieutenants, captains and majors are not issued their appropriate insignia. Meanwhile, the Mintzer brothers shake their heads in wonder and marvel at the amount of paper brought in.



*Classified's Edna Relihan, Edna Beauchamp and Rufe Walker are all pleased with a record which has consistently placed the Herald's lineage above the Free Press each month for more than a year.*



## *Classified Advertising Staff*

The Classified Advertising staff goes merrily on selling want-ads in large quantities, with Edna Relihan in charge, ably assisted by Edna Beauchamp and Rufe Walker, jr. Their former lineage chaser, Capt. Bud Keefe, recently arrived from Trinidad on leave, after over two years in that tropical paradise (O, yeah?), where his duties have covered the range from managing a string of G. I. movie theaters in Central and South America to training infantry in jungle fighting tactics. While here he will surrender (in a matrimonial way) to Miss Katherine Kelly, of Dorset, an Army nurse, whom he met for the first time in Trinidad.

Classified's second contribution to the Army, WAC Rosalie Gregory, went overseas some time ago, and now dates her letters from Paris—no less!

## *Display Advertising Department*

Hello from the Advertising Department!

Yes, we are still operating. The staff consists of Diana Conlon, George Farrell and Bill Murphy.

"Bud" Conner—for several years a member of the staff and also in charge of the Make-up Department—has been in the service about a year now. Comes home now and then—not too often. His former advertising accounts are continually asking for him and we will be glad to see him again.

Hazelle Harrison, a member of the advertising staff for 16 years, resigned last June to join her husband, Leo Harrison, former Circulation Manager of The Herald, who also resigned in May to accept a traveling position with the Rutland Fire Clay Company.

Diana Conlon—the newcomer—is the wife of Lt. George Conlon, now overseas. Diana joined the staff in June of this year. She is a native of Toronto, Canada and has lived in Portugal and other European countries. She has "personality plus" and is making plenty of friends among the advertisers and Rutland people.

George Farrell, our advertising layout man for a number of years, is still doing a swell job, and in addition is handling the Makeup Department, which means plenty of working hours!

We're still struggling to keep the lineage up—we were somewhat handicapped during the first nine months due to shortage of paper. So far, we have not had to ration advertising—having a little more paper now.

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*(Picture on left bottom) The display advertising department is shorthanded, but Manager Bill Murphy, Diana Conlon and George Farrell are carrying the load and don't seem to be downhearted about it. Local display lineage runs ahead of the Free Press most of the time.*



## ***Bill Chapin is "Missing"***

Just as this Christmas newsletter to servicemen was going to press, Herald employes learned with deep regret the news that First Lt. William P. G. Chapin, associate news editor when he entered the service, had been reported missing in action while on a bombing mission over Yugoslavia, November 5.

Bill's wife, the former Eleanor O'Hara, who is living in East Pittsford, received word that the former Herald man was missing.

Bill entered the service from The Herald, March 11, 1942 and is the first member of the staff to be reported missing.

He was pilot of a Liberator bomber, based in Italy and was a group leader at his base. He recently wrote home that he had participated in 23 missions and had earned the Air Medal, an Oak Leaf cluster and presidential citation.

All members of The Herald staff share Mrs. Chapin's anxiety over Bill's fate and we hope that soon we'll have some good news to print about the popular young newspaperman.



**LT. BILL CHAPIN.**

[Editor's Note: Lt. Chapin survived, had an injured foot amputated by a German doctor, and spent the remainder of the war in a prison camp. He returned to the Herald briefly, then went to San Francisco where he worked on newspapers and taught journalism.]

### **Herald Honor Roll**

|                         |                     |                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Rosalie V. Gregory      | Rea A. Murdock, Jr. | Richard C. Heinz      |
| William P. G. Chapin    | James I. Shute      | Arthur K. Willey, Jr. |
| Bernard J. Riter        | Alfred B. Vargas    | H. Hall Mattison      |
| William Field           | John J. Scanlon     | Donald C. Papineau    |
| Robert J. O'Shea        | Raymond J. Brunelle | John K. Canfield      |
| William A. Stanley      | Donald E. Desmarais | Nelson M. Soulia      |
| Alexander F. Keefe, Jr. | Charles W. Conner   | Winthrop W. Wilder    |
| Donaldson O. Snee       | Francis F. Allson   | Walter B. Logan       |

## ***Herald Men Back Home***

Just before The Herald Christmas letter went to press a number of our employes in the service turned up in town on leave, some of them home for the first time in many months. Besides Capt. Bud Keefe, home to break the bonds of bachelordom, Francis Allson, Ray Brunelle, and Cpl. John Canfield were all



in Rutland at the same time. Pvt. Allson had 21 days overseas leave after returning to this country from Italy with a batch of German prisoners. Pvt. Brunelle got an emergency leave on account of his mother's illness, which brought him back to Rutland from Panama for the first time since two years ago when he was inducted and left the United States within 10 days. Cpl. Canfield got three days off from his duties and training in Washington where he has been at Walter Reed and other hospitals acting as a surgeon's assistant and interne. He was just starting ambulance duty when he was home November 18.

### ***Herald 150 Years Old***

Plans for celebration of The Herald's 150th anniversary on December 8 were governed primarily by the war situation and the resulting shortage of newsprint which prevented us from publishing a sesquicentennial edition on the scale demanded by the occasion.

The Herald is by far the oldest paper of continuous publication in Vermont and one of the oldest in the United States. We may have some justification in claiming to be the oldest paper in the country which has maintained publication under the same name from the date of first publication. The Hartford Courant, which is the oldest according to most accounts, was established as the Connecticut Courant, having changed its name when the vogue of state titles passed.

John Clement, a director of The Herald & Globe association, has been working on a history of The Herald which we hoped to have ready in time for the anniversary, but it probably will not be published until next year.

The Herald continues to occupy its position as the second largest daily in Vermont, having a circulation of 16,469 for the quarter ending September 30, compared with about 21,000 for the Burlington Free Press. Under the present Herald regime, dating from the time when the paper was bought by the late William H. Field in 1927, there has been an increase of approximately 5000 in circulation. Circulation figures for earlier years are not available.

Outside recognition of The Herald in recent years has included three prizes in the N. W. Ayer typographical competition and prizes each year for the past five years in the Associated Press photo contest. In competition with newspapers published in cities of 50,000 population, The Herald has twice won first place and one third place in the Ayer contest.

The Herald regularly receives comments on its excellence from newcomers to the city and occasionally from our regular readers of many years' standing. The paper is praised for its typography and makeup, handling of the news and for its superior coverage of late wire news.

The war has created many new problems, but none has seriously affected the service which The Herald is able to render its readers.

The Herald's Frequency Modulation radio station is still in the planning stage where it will probably remain until after the war. An engineer has been employed

to make the necessary surveys for a station in preparation of a license application to the Federal Communications commission. Nothing definite can be said at this stage regarding the post-war employment possibilities of the station, if and when a license is granted.



*Lt. Bill Field, the Herald's absent publisher who enlisted in the Army in August, 1942 and is now a civil affairs officer in Germany.*



*Capt. Bud Keefe, who left classified in 1941 for the Army, and is pictured here on duty in Trinidad.*



*Herald building janitors: Louis Moore, Alec Grant and George Hurley.*



*Bob Mitchell, editor-publisher, and Al Francher, editorial writer.*



*Jack Wettleson, former managing editor, was in the office on one of his visits the day this picture was taken and he looks as hale and hearty as always despite the imminence of his 81st birthday in January. Somewhat camera shy, Art Granger and Julia Mattison had their pictures taken together for mutual support.*

**RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**96 CENTER STREET, RUTLAND, VERMONT 05701-4023**  
**(802) 775-2006**

Membership in the Society is open to all upon payment of appropriate dues. (See dues schedule below.) With membership, for its period, goes a subscription to the Quarterly, any newsletters, entitlement to vote at business meetings, and benefits accruing from support of the Society's exhibits, programs, collections and library. The year through which membership is paid and the category are noted on all address labels.

Please send any address change on Postal Service Form 3576 (a postcard freely available at your local post office).

Annual Meeting is held at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of October.

|                             |                     |                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Annual dues categories are: | Sustaining—\$125.00 | Contributing—\$20.00 |
|                             | Sponsoring—\$50.00  | Regular—\$10.00      |
|                             | Business—\$125.00   | Senior Citizens      |
|                             | Students            | (62 & up)—\$8.00     |
|                             | (18 & under)—\$8.00 |                      |

Special one-payment categories are: Lifetime—\$200.00      Memorial Gift—\$200.00

Advance payment for 2 or 3 years is welcome, helping to reduce costs.

Please make checks payable to: Rutland Historical Society

96 Center Street

Rutland, VT 05701-4023

Manuscripts are invited: address correspondence to the Managing Editor.

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Managing Editor: Elaine G. Purdy

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